Petition No. 1044 - MetroPCS

Olcott Street, Manchester, Connecticut

Staff Report

January 4, 2013

On November 29, 2012, the Connecticut Siting Council (Council) received a petition from MetroPCS for a declaratory ruling that no Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need is required for the colocation of telecommunications equipment on an existing electric transmission tower at 250 Olcott Street in Manchester. Council member Daniel Lynch Jr., and Siting Analyst Robert Mercier conducted a field review of the site on December 17, 2012 to review the proposal. Andrew Candillo of TRM, Inc. represented MetroPCS at the field review.

MetroPCS proposes to install six panel antennas at the 144-foot level of an existing 156-foot tall lattice electric transmission tower owned by The Connecticut Light and Power Company (CL&P). The CL&P tower (#20003) supports CL&P’s #395 and #1448 circuits and an existing powermount installed by New Cingular Wireless PCS LLC that was approved by the Council in 2004.

In addition to the antennas, MetroPCS proposes to install four equipment cabinets on an elevated metal platform near the base of the tower. The frame would be supported by 3.5-foot concrete piers to keep the equipment cabinets out of the 100-year flood zone. Utilities would be installed underground from Olcott Street.

The proposed site is within an industrial-zoned, CL&P transmission right-of-way approximately 100 feet south of Olcott Street. Hop Brook is located immediately west of the site. Adjacent land uses include a manufacturing plant to the east, a CL&P substation to the southwest, CL&P’s transmission right-of-way to the north, and the Town of Manchester landfill, public works department, and sewage treatment plant to the west. The nearest residence is approximately 500 feet away.

CL&P and the Town of Manchester have previously reviewed the project. CL&P would require MetroPCS to perform structural modifications to the tower to accommodate the new loading. At the Town’s request, MetroPCS would install a screening wall on the platform to shield views of the equipment cabinets from a dirt walking path that runs along the right-of-way adjacent to the site.

The proposed establishment of a new lease and ground equipment area is not expected to have any substantial adverse environmental effect. Approximately 22 square feet of permanent wetland impact would occur within the cleared right-of-way. Adjacent disturbed areas would be seeded with native vegetation. The incremental visual impact is not expected to be significant given that the structure already exists, a powermount is already on the tower, and other electric transmission infrastructure is in proximity to the site. The addition of MetroPCS’s antennas would bring the cumulative power density at the site to 6.2 percent of the FCC limit for maximum permissible exposure.